Saskatchewan
Agriculture
and Food

# Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

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2007-02928/

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Log Number: 06-32-143
Week of August 7, 2006

## SOYBEAN PROCESSING COMES TO SASKATCHEWAN

A new state-of-the-art facility for processing soybeans could provide the Saskatchewan agricultural sector with its latest value-added innovation.

Biosynergeuticals Inc., or BioSyn for short, recently held an open house at its production site in Wynyard to unveil a ground-breaking pilot project.

The BioSyn technology is capable of extracting enzymes from soybeans, which have shown promising health benefits in the treatment of a diverse range of ailments, from diabetes, cholesterol and high blood pressure to acne, hives and allergic reactions.

The enzymes are removed using an innovative process that Lorne Nystrom, one of the founding members of BioSyn, calls "cutting edge, one-of-a-kind technology."

Nystrom said, "No one else in the world has this technology. We have it here in Wynyard, and we hope to take it world-wide."

The company's machinery can process batches of soybeans in 30 to 40 seconds, producing a liquid extract that removes five per cent of the soybean by weight and leaves the remainder intact for other uses, such as the production of cattle feed or tofu.

Nystrom said BioSyn will operate the Wynyard facility as a pilot project demonstration plant using a single machine for now, while the company proceeds with global product marketing and investigates additional financing opportunities.

According to Nystrom, there is a great deal of interest in the product in Asia, where aggressive promotion is currently taking place. The American and European markets are also being targeted for growth.

BioSyn is presently awaiting approval from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to sell the extract as a food in this country. In time, it is hoped the product can also be marketed in Canada as a health food, although that process can be quite lengthy.

(more)

The Wynyard processing facility is located in a former water bottling plant that sat unused for more than10 years until it was converted by BioSyn for its present use. The soybeans currently processed at the site are all grown by a local producer.

While the company's proponents feel the sky's the limit when it comes to their innovation, Nystrom said they are taking a gradual, step-by-step approach to prospective expansion.

"Our first step is to firm up markets and incorporate additional investment from folks who are expressing a great deal of interest in our technology," he said.

"We have the ability to handle some commercial processing using the single machine we currently have set up. We'll expand from there as need be," he added, noting the 45,000-square-foot Wynyard plant has room for 90 machines in addition to office space.

"Our goal is to take Wynyard, and Saskatchewan, world-wide," said Nystrom.

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For further information, contact:

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## CHEERY CHERRY FESTIVAL COMING UP IN BRUNO

The third annual Cherry Festival in Bruno, August 11 to 13, will combine all things cherry with literary, educational and social pursuits. Marilyn Jonas, chair of the Carlton Trail Agricultural Society (which helps organize the festival) says there are a lot of new features this year.

"The festival starts out with a warm-up night on Friday, August 11, with the Literary Cherry Book Club," says Jonas. "We have a book club in town and they wanted to know what they could contribute, so they have organized a supper and an author discussion."

The supper costs $20 to attend and is followed by a discussion of the book *What I'm Trying to Say is Goodbye*, by Lois Simmie. Simmie will be there for the open discussion, which happens in conjunction with the Cherry Cheesecake Café. The café serves home-baked New-York-style cheesecake, with, of course, cherry topping. Performances of cowboy poetry throughout the festival round out the literary component.

The festival gets into full swing on Saturday, August 12, with educational seminars running from 11:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. This year's seminars focus on fruit production and horticulture, as well as cooking and wine-making demonstrations. Local demonstrators will cook up a menu using cherries and other Saskatchewan-made products.

"This is 'real food' you would make in your own kitchen," says Jonas. "The cooks use a home-grown approach, so people can actually make these dishes themselves."

A wine-maker from Saskatoon will also be on hand to demonstrate wine-making with fruit. All these delicious dishes need fruit to get started, so there are also regular tours of the demonstration orchard, with "how to" sessions on grafting, planting and mulching.

A mini cherry trade show will also be open for both days of the festival, featuring fruit growers, educational and industry displays, and local businesses and artists. Also available is a cherry products booth, selling frozen cherries, cherry topping, and the more exotic cherry salsa and cherry vinaigrette.

Entertainment for all ages runs throughout the festival, including a children's carnival, a corn maze and wagon rides for the younger set. Older cherry enthusiasts can enjoy bingo, a licensed area, and dozens of cherry dishes to try.

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Jones says one of the "can't miss" events is the ever-popular Cherry Pit Spit Challenge, in which contestants go through several run-off rounds for the honours of the farthest "pit spit."

"Those winners will take the big challenge on Sunday afternoon. It's made up of a final four, as well as celebrity spitters." Jonas is keeping the identities of the celebrity spitters a secret for the moment.

A complete schedule of events and more information about the festival is on the Internet at www.carltontrailagsociety.ca. A festival pass is $2.00 per person or $5.00 per family, and covers all events and activities, except for food and beverage purchases and the bingo tent.

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For more information, contact:

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## SASKATOON BERRY HARVEST IMPROVES OVER LAST YEAR

Saskatoon lovers will be licking their lips this year, as commercial growers in the province enjoyed a better-than-average harvest, according to Ken Adams of Valleytop Berry Farm near Langenburg.

Adams and his wife Kathy harvested 9,000 pounds of commercial berries this summer, on top of those gathered by patrons of their U-pick operation.

That was a noticeable improvement over last year, when cold, wet weather and an early frost left most growers in Saskatchewan with smaller crops, some of which were hit by disease.

Due to the hot, dry conditions this July, the saskatoon harvest also came and went very quickly across the province.

Ordinarily, Adams harvests his crops in two passes – one when about 60 to 70 per cent of the crop is ripe, and another when the remaining berries reach maturity.

This year, the berries on his farm ripened rapidly and had to be gathered in a single pass by the harvester, which made for a very busy season.

Adams noted that berry operations are like most other types of farming. "There are lots of overhead and input costs, and you've got to work hard at it to make a go of things," he said. And, like grain producers, he has found the price his commercial saskatoon crop fetches remains stubbornly low. As a result, Adams is studying the potential offered by export markets.

"If I've got an opportunity to improve my returns by expanding my market, that's something I have to look at very closely," he said.

In the meantime, saskatoon fans in Saskatchewan can look forward to enjoying their favourite pies, jams and jellies again this year.

Readers looking for saskatoon berry recipes should check out the website of the Saskatchewan Fruit Growers Association. Here they will find instructions on how to prepare a wide range of traditional berry favourites, as well as some unique, mouth-watering delicacies.

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The website is located at www.saskfruit.com.

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For more information, contact:

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## DISCUSS ANTHRAX CONCERNS WITH A VETERINARIAN

The number of dead cattle attributed to anthrax reached 273 on 59 premises in Saskatchewan as of July 25, according to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).

The vast majority of the cases have occurred in the northeast region of the province, where a total of 14 rural municipalities have thus far been affected. Most are located in areas that experienced heavy rainfall, flooding and excessive moisture this spring.

However, the spores that cause anthrax can potentially be buried anywhere across the prairies, according to Dr. Sandra Stephens with the Saskatoon branch of the CFIA.

"We've recently had a new case spring up in Chaplin, in the southwest part of the province, and a small outbreak in southern Manitoba," she said. "So we're still seeing a few new cases."

Stephens noted that cattle producers generally remain concerned about the disease. She is reminding farmers to speak with their veterinarians if they are particularly worried about the risk to their animals.

"Many producers are wondering whether they should vaccinate their cattle against anthrax," she said. "I would urge them to talk to their veterinarian. These professionals can provide them with the best possible advice on the matter."

Anthrax is spread by spores that can remain in the soil for long periods of time, then rise to the surface when there is excessive moisture or drought. Cattle can also be at risk when standing water dries up, revealing grazing areas that normally wouldn't be exposed. Excavation work done on some farms may likewise cause spores to emerge.

While Saskatchewan producers appear most concerned about cattle, Stephens noted that anthrax can occur in all mammals, particularly grazing animals. As a result, horses, swine, bison, sheep and goats are also susceptible, as are wild cervids such as whitetail deer.

Animals that are determined to have died from the disease are either burned or buried to prevent further contamination; however, it is impossible to know whether anthrax might arise or recur in a given area, and under what conditions. That's why producers are particularly well-served seeking professional input from their veterinarian, Stephens suggested.

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"The good news is that there is an effective vaccine against anthrax, and it's not very expensive," she said, noting that the cost of the vaccine generally ranges from $2 to $2.50 per animal.

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## JUNIOR EQUESTRIANS TO COMPETE IN MELVILLE

Equine enthusiasts from across the province will come together in Melville on August 19 and 20 for the Youth Equestrian Summer Games.

The event features two days of competition, and also includes the Saskatchewan Light Horse Show.

"We'll be taking registrations right up until the day of the games," said Sandy Assman, one of the games' co-ordinators. "Of course, we would prefer if people registered early."

Youth members from 4-H, Pony Club Quarter Horse, High School Rodeo, Paint, Arabian, Appaloosa, POA Dressage and Hunter/Jumper clubs are all eligible to take part in the event.

Last year's games and show drew nearly 100 youth competitors from all around Saskatchewan, and this year's event could be even larger, Assman said. Competitors are organized by age groups (11 and under, 12-14 and 15-17).

The games are a product of the youth programs offered through the Saskatchewan Horse Federation, the provincial association dedicated to promoting the breeding and raising of better quality horses, as well as organizing equestrian activities, shows and competitions in the province.

Assman said there are many parts of the event that everyone will enjoy, but the best event for a casual observer is the costume class.

"There will be about 25 kids (with their horses) in what are starting to become very elaborate costumes," she noted. "The costume class is choreographed to music, and the kids all dress and choreograph their own rides."

One of Assman's goals when she organized the first summer games in Yorkton five years ago was to make equine competition a fun, friendly time, and to mix the youth into different categories so they could get to know people from outside their class and riding style.

"I wanted to emphasize that we are all human beings riding equines. It doesn't matter what the saddle is," she said.

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Youth are randomly split into one of four teams when they arrive, and team members are encouraged to cheer one another on across the many classes of competition and age ranges, regardless of style or skill. A special medal is given to the team with the most points at the conclusion of the games.

Saskatchewan Horse Federation shows and competitions are about teaching and raising the performance standards of the industry, a message Assman said is best taught while riders are young.

The federation also offers classes year-round that emphasize horse care and learning riding styles like English and Western.

Assman said there are features of the event that are appealing to serious riders and equine experts, as well as the general public.

The competitions are free of charge to attend, and will all take place in two rings at the Melville Agricultural Park on the east side of the city.

The games wrap up on Sunday, August 20, with an awards and medal ceremony.

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For more information, contact:

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